

**SENATE
STATE OF MINNESOTA
NINETY-THIRD SESSION**

S.F. No. 4325

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02/29/2024	11835	Introduction and first reading Referred to Education Policy

1.1 A bill for an act

1.2 relating to education; establishing a skills path program for employment-based

1.3 training; proposing coding for new law in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 124D.

1.4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.5 Section 1. **[124D.351] SKILLS PATH PROGRAM.**

1.6 Subdivision 1. Purpose. The purpose of the skills path program is to provide students

1.7 with clear pathways from high school to careers in skilled work and the trades and create

1.8 opportunities for students to enter postsecondary programs and employment-based training

1.9 in high school.

1.10 Subd. 2. Definitions. (a) For purposes of this section, the following terms have the

1.11 meanings given.

1.12 (b) "Career and technical education dual credit program" means a postsecondary career

1.13 or technical education course under section 124D.09, subdivision 5; a secondary course that

1.14 has a current articulation agreement for postsecondary credit hours with a participating

1.15 institution; or a youth skills training program that awards postsecondary credit to students.

1.16 (c) "Employment-based training" means a registered apprenticeship or apprenticeship

1.17 readiness program, a dual-training program, a workforce training program at an opportunities

1.18 industrialization center, or other work-based learning programs in which the student has

1.19 paid employment.

1.20 Subd. 3. Eligible institutions. (a) A secondary public school, an American

1.21 Indian-controlled Tribal contract or grant school eligible for aid under section 124D.83,

2.1 vocational center school, or a nonpublic school, or any combination of schools, is eligible
2.2 to apply for a skills path program designation.

2.3 (b) A Minnesota state college or university, an institution licensed or registered as a
2.4 postsecondary institution by the Office of Higher Education, or an institution exempt from
2.5 the provisions of sections 136A.61 to 136A.71, or 136A.822 to 136A.834, as approved by
2.6 the Office of Higher Education may partner with an institution in paragraph (a) to provide
2.7 a postsecondary options enrollment career and technical education course for eligible students
2.8 in a skills path program.

2.9 (c) An eligible institution may work in partnership with one or more postsecondary
2.10 programs designated in paragraph (b) to create a two-year program that incorporates
2.11 secondary and postsecondary credit along with employment-based training to award an
2.12 associate degree in skilled occupations.

2.13 Subd. 4. **Skills path programs.** The commissioner of education must develop an
2.14 application for programs that provide students with clear pathways from high school to
2.15 careers in skilled work and the trades to be designated as skills path programs. Skills path
2.16 programs must include career connected learning options, career and technical education
2.17 dual credit program options, and employment-based training opportunities to be eligible
2.18 for this designation. Applicants must demonstrate how skills path programs will be marketed
2.19 to students and what other local partners and employers are involved in developing career
2.20 pathway opportunities. Skills path programs may be identified in skilled occupations and
2.21 the trades, including manufacturing, construction, health care services, information
2.22 technology, agriculture, transportation, child care, law enforcement, energy, and other related
2.23 industries.

2.24 Subd. 5. **Interaction with education finance.** For the purpose of computing state aids
2.25 for the school district, students participating in the skills path programs under this section
2.26 shall be counted in the average daily membership of the school district.

2.27 Subd. 6. **Academic credit.** A school district may grant academic credit for skills path
2.28 programs under this section in accordance with local requirements.

2.29 Sec. 2. **[124D.352] SKILLS PATH GRANT PROGRAM.**

2.30 (a) The commissioner of education shall award grants up to \$50,000 per grant to up to
2.31 ten secondary schools annually for skills path programs that align career and technical
2.32 education dual credit program options with employment-based training opportunities.
2.33 Applications must demonstrate how grant funding will provide students with clear pathways

3.1 from high school to postsecondary training that lead to careers in skilled work and the trades.
3.2 The commissioner of education may work with the commissioner of higher education and
3.3 the commissioner of labor and industry to develop the grant application and administer the
3.4 grants.

3.5 (b) A secondary school awarded a grant under this section must use the grant award for
3.6 any of the following implementation and coordination activities:

3.7 (1) marketing efforts to students about skills path program opportunities;

3.8 (2) coordinating academic, vocational, and occupational learning, school-based and
3.9 work-based learning, and secondary and postsecondary education for participants in the
3.10 program;

3.11 (3) reimbursement of tuition, books, required tools, and other expenses necessary for
3.12 participation in the program; and

3.13 (4) any other implementation or coordination activity that the commissioner may direct
3.14 or permit the eligible institution to perform.

3.15 (c) Grant awards may not be used to pay the wages of a student directly or indirectly.

3.16 (d) The following information must be included in the grant application:

3.17 (1) the identity of each secondary school that is a participant in the skills path program;

3.18 (2) the identity of each registered apprenticeship program or apprenticeship readiness
3.19 program, dual-training program, workforce training program at an opportunities
3.20 industrialization center, or other work-based learning program in which the student has the
3.21 opportunity for paid employment that is a participant in the skills path program;

3.22 (3) the identity of each postsecondary institution, intermediate school district, public
3.23 agency, nonprofit organization, union, career and technical education consortium, or
3.24 workforce development authority that is a participant in the skills path program;

3.25 (4) the identity of any employers participating in the skills path program;

3.26 (5) a description of any career connected learning components;

3.27 (6) a description of the career and technical education dual-credit program options;

3.28 (7) a description of any postsecondary education components in the skills path program;

3.29 (8) a description of employment-based training opportunities; and

3.30 (9) applicable career planning information.

4.1 Sec. 3. **SKILLS PATH PROGRAM; APPROPRIATION.**

4.2 \$500,000 in fiscal year 2025 is appropriated from the general fund to the commissioner
4.3 of education to administer skills path grants under Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.352.

4.4 The base for fiscal years 2026 and later is \$500,000.